

“Very good,” Rhaenyra praised as Jon pulled away from her without any visible struggle, licking lips to get the last drops of her blood. She reached out and tutted as she grasped his collar, pointing out the tiny red stain on it. “You’re still a somewhat messy eater, though.”

“Better than my first time,” he said softly, recalling the absolute mess he’d made of the man who had attacked them back in King’s Landing.

“Isn’t that always the case?” Rhaenyra asked, her voice turning huskier with each word, and before Jon could even look at her questioningly, she rushed up and sank her fangs into his neck.

He gasped and his knees buckled, the pleasure of being fed on no less intense than the first time, and as he staggered back, he wrapped his arms around her, holding her to him even as his back hit the side of the train car they were in. She fed with an efficiency that even Shiera lacked, her greater experience letting her make sure that she didn’t take a drop more than he had from her, and when she finally pulled back and licked her lips, he chuckled at how clean she looked despite what she’d just done.

“I’ve been feeding for a long time,” Rhaenyra smirked, knowing what he was thinking, and he leaned back against the side of the train.

“How did you become a vampire?” Jon asked, and her expression shifted instantly. “If you don’t want to talk about it, I understand, but…”

“No, you deserve the story,” Rhaenyra sighed, sitting down and gesturing for him to do the same as Shiera and Daenerys rejoined them.

“We really do have this thing to ourselves,” the youngest of the three beamed. “I didn’t know you acquired a train for us?”

“It’s a rental, so to speak,” Rhaenyra replied. “This thing is the simplest method to get to the far north, given the lack of nearby airports, so I made some arrangements.”

“Alyn and Addam seem to have things well in hand,” Shiera said.

“I know that operating a train isn’t the most difficult thing in the world, but do they have prior experience?” Jon asked.

“They’ve been my thralls for longer than there have been trains,” Rhaenyra replied, shaking her head. “Getting them a chance to learn how to do this was part of the arrangements I mentioned.”

“You looked serious when we walked in,” Shiera murmured. “Are you nervous about seeing your uncle after all these years?”

“A little, but that wasn’t what we were discussing,” Jon replied.

“Jon asked how I became what I am,” Rhaenyra said, and both Shiera and Daenerys grew more serious at once.

“I take it this isn’t a heartwarming tale,” Jon said, and the ancient vampire shook her head.

“It might have been if not for my stupidity and selfishness,” Rhaenyra muttered. “I’m one of the oldest living vampires left, but I was not from the first generation.”

“I didn’t think you were,” Jon murmured. “Given your age, I imagine that vampires have been around for millennia.”

“You imagine wrong,” Rhaenyra replied. “I’m the oldest of the second-generation vampires and was turned just a few years after the first generation became what they did.”

“What?” Jon asked, furrowing his brow in confusion. “So vampires have only been around for centuries?”

“There might have been more of them once, but if there were, they’d all died out before my uncle and the others became what we are,” Rhaenyra replied. “You saw his portrait in my study, the handsome, youngish man with the silver-gold hair. He was part of the Bloodstone Expedition, a treasure hunting adventure financed by the famous seafarer Corlys Velaryon.”

“I think I’ve heard that name before,” Jon murmured, struggling to remember which particular history class it might have been in, “and not just because you mentioned one of the clans being called Velaryon.”

“I’m surprised if so,” Rhaenyra replied. “His legend has faded through the centuries, but in his day, he was widely famous. He went on numerous great voyages in his time, sailing out to distant lands and trading goods from Westeros for great treasures. It made him incredibly wealthy, and it also exposed him to a number of legends, one of which intrigued him like none other. It told the tale of a pirate lord who was a terror in his day, accumulating a vast treasure horde through pillage and plunder, all of which he apparently stored in one great buried vault before he was captured and executed. Before his death, the legend said, he gave his torturer a riddle that apparently contained all the information anyone clever enough would need to find his treasure.”

“Sounds like nonsense, though I’m guessing it wasn’t,” Jon said, and Rhaenyra smiled slightly.

“It wasn’t,” she confirmed. “Corlys managed to acquire a scroll containing what the man he bought it from assured him was an exact dictation of the riddle and spent thirty years pondering it. When he finally worked out what he thought was the location, on the isle of Bloodstone, he put together an expeditionary force to go find the treasure. Among them were my uncle, Daemon, Crispian Celtigar, Belthasar Bolton, Bryndemere Tarth, and Gunthor Estermont.”

“The first generation of vampires,” Jon guessed, and she nodded.

“They were,” Rhaenyra replied. “They found the treasure horde where Corlys thought it would be, and when they did, they discovered that the pirate lord had acquired a number of chests that he never got the chance to open.”

“That’s...odd,” Jon said, and she shrugged.

“Corlys’ theory was that he raided some crypt and barely managed to get the chests stored before he learned that he was being pursued and fled, hoping to not only escape but draw the naval forces away from his hidden stronghold,” Rhaenyra murmured.

“Her uncle’s theory was that he was just a dumb cunt,” Daenerys piped up, and Rhaenyra smiled wistfully.

“My uncle always did like simple explanations,” she murmured. “At any rate, in one of these heavily sealed chests, they found a chalice, a beautiful, ornate silver thing that they all found most compelling. When they and their men finished hauling the countless chests full of unimaginable riches out of the ruined fort, the six of them gathered around Corlys’ personal quarters on his ship, and he pulled out a bottle of wine he’d acquired at the last port they resupplied from to celebrate with. He’d taken the chalice and decided to drink from it, something that the rest of them found just as compelling.”

“Again, odd,” Jon murmured, and she smiled.

“It was,” Rhaenyra nodded. “The Bloodstone Chalice, as they took to calling it, turned out to have special powers. The moment they finished drinking their celebratory toasts from it, six small gems appeared around it.”

“Appeared?” Jon asked.

“As if by magic,” Rhaenyra replied, “and that was far from the most magical thing about it. They were disturbed by the inexplicable phenomenon and decided to stash it away, not wanting anyone else to touch it. Over the course of their journey home, they each came down with a strange malady. It started with their eyes becoming overly sensitive to light, something that was so much worse on a ship than it would be anywhere else then they started to turn pink if they spent too much time out on the deck during the day. By the time they reached Corlys’ manor, that had come to include actual burning pain as well, pain that would disappear if they spent time in the shade, and they’d developed other symptoms too.”

“So it didn’t happen immediately?” Jon asked, furrowing his brow. “Fascinating. I imagine the hunger was the next major thing they felt.”

“No matter what they ate it wasn’t enough,” Rhaenyra nodded. “Bryndamere Tarth apparently gorged himself to the point he threw up more than once trying to make it stop. The others theorized that it was one of a number of potential illnesses that were all too common for those who spent long periods of time at sea back then, while the most superstitious among their crew started to fear that the pirate’s ghost had cursed them. It wasn’t until they returned home that my uncle discovered just what it was that they were all craving. He got into a fight at a local tavern, and as he broke the poor man’s nose, he got covered in his blood, some of which fell into his mouth.”

“From the first taste, he just knew,” Shiera continued for her, having heard that part of the story multiple times before.

“More to the point, from the first taste, the transformation was complete,” Rhaenyra replied. “He could no longer go out in sunlight without risking fatal burns and needed to drink blood regularly to function. As the other five saw their condition worsen, he told them of what he’d done, and after a time, they all followed suit. The first generation of vampires were born and restraint was not something that came naturally to them.”

“They didn’t have anyone to teach it to them,” Jon murmured.

“In the case of Corlys, he was so old when he transformed that suddenly feeling like he’d regained his youth made him the most exuberant of all of them,” Rhaenyra said. “When they realized that they couldn’t safely be near their loved ones, they left, making their way over to Essos, wherein they taught themselves control. In those days the continent was beset by roaming bands of murderous bandits known as Dothraki. They were apparently delicious.”

“They did learn to control themselves, though,” Jon said, and she nodded.

“It was a long and very bloody process but yes,” Rhaenyra replied. “I was a young girl when my uncle left on the Bloodstone Expedition, and though he did visit my father when he returned, I never got a chance to see him. By the time I saw him again, I was a woman grown, with a full figure, a sharp tongue, and an all-consuming desire to escape my life, courtesy of my stepmother. My mother had died in the intervening years, and my father remarried. Suffice to say we didn’t get along.”

“Is that what made your uncle desire to turn you?” Jon asked.

“No, that was his desire to bed me,” Rhaenyra replied, and his eyes widened. “It wasn’t entirely unheard of in those days, and I was not exactly hard on the eyes.”

“Most assuredly not,” Daenerys purred.

“When he demonstrated the power that I could wield and how I could escape the marriage my father was trying to arrange for me, I took him up on his offer and became a creature of the night,” Rhaenyra concluded, her eyes quickly dimming. “Of course, things went wrong there almost immediately, but that’s a story for another time. The sun should be down by the time we arrive in Whitetree, and it won’t take us long to reach your uncle’s research facility from there, so we should rest now.”

“You really weren’t able to get through to them?” Jon asked, and she shook her head.

“The one number my people were able to find didn’t work,” Rhaenyra replied. “We’ll be able to charm our way in no matter what, though, so I’m not concerned.”

Daenerys looked at the blacked out windows of the train and smirked, tracing a finger over them and saying, “This paint worked even better than what we used last time.”

“Getting it off will be a joy, I’m sure, but that’s what thralls are for,” Rhaenyra murmured.

“My father took us all this far north once,” Jon murmured as he drove them along the pitch-black road out of Whitetree.

“Was it to see your uncle?” Sheira asked and he shook his head.

“No, I don’t think Benjen was here then,” Jon replied. “He’d always wanted to see that massive weirwood tree at the center of the town, and one year he decided to use up a couple of his vacation days to do it. Catelyn bitched the entire time about how cold she was, and Sansa was almost as bad, but he and I got some great pictures out of it. I think it’s around three thousand years old or something like that. It’s utterly massive.”

“I saw it around a century and half ago,” Rhaenyra murmured. “Climbed it too?”

“Seriously?” Jon asked.

“We’re incredibly durable, so I didn’t mind the height at all,” Rhaenyra replied. “You can see for miles from its higher branches.”

“Maybe we’ll climb it together before we leave,” Jon murmured, and the ancient vampire smiled at him, well aware of the fact that he was trying to distract himself from the conversation ahead.

She’d offered more than once to put this off, but he’d been insistent, needing to know the truth about his origins even if the prospect of getting the answers was a deeply unpleasant one. She understood that, as did Shiera and Daenerys, who had come along mostly as moral support. For her, it was more than that, as this mortal who’d proven so annoying to get in contact with likely had answers that would let her definitely tie Jon to his place in her family line.

“There aren’t very many Targaryens left that I haven’t accounted for,” she thought to herself. “There aren’t very many Targaryens left, period. You warned me that my line would likely go the way of yours someday, Laena. Hells, if not for my father’s second family, which I so loathed in life, it would have done so already.”

The fact that vampires couldn’t have children was something that her uncle and the others didn’t yet know when he turned her, and part of her resented him for that for years after the fact, but as it stood, her father’s line did continue, and that had given her the potential to make children of them. She knew that if the mortal lines died out, though, that would be it, and Shiera, Daenerys, Jon, and whoever else she managed to turn before then would be the only family left to her.

“There’s always the possibility of other bastards,” she thought to herself, sitting up straight as she spotted lights in the distance.

“I see it,” Jon nodded. “I’m still amazed I can see at all in this darkness. You’d think they hadn’t heard of proper street lights.”

“We’re lucky there are streets,” Shiera muttered.

“We are in the frozen arsehole of nowhere,” Daenerys added.

“You say that like you can feel the cold,” Shiera chuckled, and Daenerys smiled.

That was something that Jon had been genuinely surprised by. The last time he was here, though he didn’t complain like Catelyn and Sansa had, he had noticed the biting cold. It was little better this time around, and yet he barely felt it. One of the perks of vampirism, as it turned out. They reached the front gate of the laboratory after another minute of driving and were immediately beset by security. One particular guard, gesturing to the others to hang back, stepped forward and tapped on Jon’s window, which he quickly lowered.

“This is a restricted area,” the man said. “I’m going to have to ask you to turn around and continue on your way.”

“We’re with the department of environmental protection,” Jon said, staring into his eyes and smiling as he felt his mind open to him. “Here for a random inspection.”

“At this hour of night?” the guard asked.

“It’s less random during the day,” Jon drawled.

"I'm going to need to see identification," the guard said, and Jon furrowed his brow, pushing a little harder into the other man's mind.

"You just did," he said. "It was in order."

"Oh, right," the guard said. Turning to the others, he called out, "Let them in; it's a government inspection."

"At this bloody hour?" one of the others asked incredulously.

"Their ID checks out," the first guard shrugged. "I don't want to be the one who has to explain why we got dinged for something."

The others grumbled but said nothing more and let them in. Jon, rubbing his head, drove past the confused guards, feeling deeply pleased with himself despite the growing headache.

"Does that happen every time?" he asked as he parked the car.

"Using the charm ability is a little like exercising a mental muscle," Shiera replied. "The more you do it, the easier it becomes."

"It's significantly harder to use on unwitting mortals than it is on willing thralls, so I'm actually quite impressed with you for that," Rhaenyra said, having assumed that she'd need to step in. "You forgot to tell him that he didn't think there was anything out of the ordinary here, though."

"Shit," Jon muttered, and she chuckled.

"It will be fine," Rhaenyra murmured, smirking as she looked in the rearview mirror. "It just means that we're going to end up with a welcoming committee to deal with, and that might prove advantageous in the end."

"Is your uncle among this group?" Daenerys asked, and Jon looked from face to face, trying to see if anyone looked familiar.

"Keep in mind I haven't seen even more recent pictures of him in quite a while," he replied as they got out of the rental car they'd taken. "No one there has the Stark look, though."

"Who the bloody hell are you?" the very tired-sounding, white-haired man at the head of the group asked as he reached them. "What's this about an inspection?"

"Tell me your name," Rhaenyra commanded, looking the man in the eye and smiling softly when his eyes glazed over.

"Dr. Jeor Mormont," the man replied.

"Sir?" one of the others asked, weirded out by how quickly the irritation bled out of his boss's voice.

Daenerys and Shiera quickly charmed all of them, calming them down and convincing them that nothing at all was amiss about any of this.

"We're looking for Benjen Stark," Rhaenyra said. "Is he here?"

“Dr. Stark’s here, yes,” Jeor replied, furrowing his brow in confusion. “Is this inspection about him?”

“Forget about the inspection,” Rhaenyra commanded. “We’re here to see Dr. Stark, and there is nothing at all out of the ordinary about that. You will lead us to him, let us speak with him in private, and then let us leave without a single thought about us. This is perfectly routine, perfectly normal, and not something that you will feel the need to discuss with anyone.”

“Perfectly normal,” Jeor said. “Follow me, and I’ll bring you to him.”

“Make sure the guards are on the same page and then join us,” Rhaenyra commanded, and Shiera and Daenerys nodded before going off to speak with the guards they’d seen before.

Jon followed the two of them silently, trying to think of what he was going to ask his uncle.

“At least I know he is my uncle,” he thought to himself, tinged with the bitterness he’d felt since Shiera first dumped the potential truth of his parentage on him weeks ago creeping up.

He didn’t blame her, as she was just doing what Rhaenyra asked of her, and the centuries-old vampire’s obsession with her bloodline made perfect sense too. When they’d first brought up the idea that he had to be related to them, he’d laughed it off, figuring that it was a very distant relation and that was that. He never imagined in a million years that he’d end up learning that his parents weren’t actually his biological parents, something that he still wasn’t going to fully believe until someone named Stark told him it was true.

“Why the fuck did he never tell me?” was the one question that had been bouncing around his head ever since that conversation in the manor. It made no sense and was but one of the questions he had for Benjen.

“He’s in here, though he’s working on something at the moment, and I’ll need to take him away from it gently,” Jeor said. “The last door on your right at the end of this hallway leads to his office, and he’ll be able to speak with you in there.”

“Understood,” Rhaenyra replied, swiping the man’s keycard as he left and checking his ID. “Senior director. I wonder why he came to bother us in person.”

“He was probably nearby and rushed out out of sheer irritation,” Jon replied. “What do they do here, anyway?”

“It seems to be biological research of some kind,” Rhaenyra replied. “They’re connected to the government, whatever they do, hence why they were merely confused by the idea of the feds coming to bother them at this hour rather than baffled by the idea that they would at all. My contacts couldn’t actually get a lot of concrete information either way when they looked into it.”

She used his keycard to let them into Benjen’s office, guessing correctly that Mormont’s card would unlock most, if not all, doors in the lab, and looked around the place. It was rather sparsely decorated and almost entirely devoid of pictures, suggesting the man was rather work-focused, to put it mildly.

“I don’t know who you are, but barging into my office...Jon?” Benjen asked. “What in...how did you get in here?”

“Was Aunt Lyanna my mother?” Jon blurted out, and Benjen’s eyes widened before dimming.

“I understand why you’d want to speak to me about that, but coming here...you have no idea how much trouble you’re going to be in,” the man muttered, pinching his nose. “I have no idea how in the world you managed to fool Jeor into thinking you belonged here.”

“We’ll be fine,” Rhaenyra said, staring into his eyes and calming him with a simple mental probe. “Answer Jon’s questions while I return this keycard to your director.”

Benjen nodded and gestured to one of the chairs in front of his desk before taking his seat behind it.

“I take it he didn’t tell you the truth before...before he died,” he sighed.

“It is true then?” Jon asked, feeling his heart sink.

“It is,” Benjen sighed. “Are you sick?”

“What?” Jon asked.

“If Ned didn’t tell you the truth, then the most likely reason that you’d have learned at all would be testing Sansa’s genetic connection to you,” Benjen surmised, and Jon sighed, shaking his head.

“I haven’t spoken to Sansa in ages,” he muttered. “That woman who just left, she’s related to my...to Rhaegar.”

“Ah,” Benjen nodded. “Rhaegar’s your biological father then?”

“He was,” Jon replied. “He suffered a stroke, and we think it was after he learned about what happened to her. Did you never meet him?”

“Jon, your mother was...troubled,” Benjen sighed, and he felt his heart clench at hearing the aunt he’d never known referred to as his mother. “She went through a rebellious phase in high school that never seemed to end. Our parents tore their hair out trying to deal with her, and when she turned eighteen, she left. I was...still in school, and there wasn’t anything I could do for her but Ned...”

“Was older,” Jon nodded. “What happened?”

“Our parents pursued her and tried to bring her back, but she refused, and she was an adult,” Benjen sighed. “They eventually decided that the only course of action they had was to wait and let her life fall apart so they could help her pick up the pieces and hope she learned her lesson. I disagreed, but I was just a dumb kid. I begged Ned to try to help her in their place, but he agreed with them, mostly because he was too busy with his own life.”

“You resent him for what happened to her,” Jon murmured, and Benjen scowled.

“I loved her and I lost her,” he muttered. “I know she was difficult, that she had been for a while, but everyone...everyone just gave up. I don’t care if it’s irrational or not; I’ll never stop thinking that if they’d just tried harder, if Ned had tried at all to appeal to her as something other than an annoying authority figure, she might not have ended up in that bank that day. We didn’t even know she was pregnant until the hospital called us.”

“Fuck,” Jon sighed, shaking his head as Benjen’s eyes grew damp.

“It broke our parents,” he continued. “Ned and Ash had been having trouble conceiving for a while by then, and so...they took you in. I couldn’t, young as I was, and our parents...neither one of them lived very long after what happened. You had the Stark look and you even had eyes like Ashara’s. She and Ned got the family they wanted, and I lost everyone.”

“So did he,” Jon muttered, and Benjen nodded, staring at the ground.

“Logically, I know that, and when your mum passed, I tried to reconnect with him but...sometimes things run too deep,” he sighed.

“And me?” Jon asked bitterly. “I’m her son, after all.”

“I did send you that letter after Ned’s funeral,” Benjen replied. “Things were so...awkward there that neither of us said much, but I did say in it that if you had any questions, I...”

“What letter?” Jon asked, and he blinked at him.

“I wrote you a letter after saying that if you had any questions, you could call me,” Benjen replied, sounding confused. “I gave you my cell number too, figuring that would be simpler than trying to break into a top-secret facility. Still wondering how the hell you pulled this off.”

“I never got any letter from you,” Jon replied. “Where did you send it?”

“Ned’s place,” Benjen replied.

“Fucking Catelyn,” Jon growled, and Benjen’s eyes widened.

“You really didn’t get it?” he asked, shaking his head. “I worded it the way that I did because I figured you’d be more likely to reach out to me if Ned had told you the truth than otherwise, and I didn’t know if he ever did.”

“Why didn’t you just tell me the truth either way?” Jon muttered.

“Because if you didn’t know, then I’d have been taking your parents from you just after you lost him,” Benjen sighed. “I really did think that you’d reach out to me eventually.”

Jon shook his head at that and stood up, staring out the window.

“Do you have any idea why he never told me?” he asked. “It’s not like I was a kid when he died.”

“My brother was a man given to compartmentalization, in a way,” Benjen sighed. “The last time we spoke, I tried to bring Lyanna up, tried to work through my own lingering feelings with the one living soul who actually could help me, and he just...couldn’t. She was in the Lyanna box in that brain of his, and that was one he did not open. I figured he would tell you once you were an adult, but clearly his reluctance to go there ran deeper than even I realized. It destroyed our family; I understood why he felt that way, but...”

He trailed off, and Jon sighed.

“So Lyanna and Rhaegar really are my parents,” he muttered. “I’m an orphan twice over.”

“Ned and Ash were your mother and father in every way that counted,” Benjen sighed, resting a hand on his shoulder. “I...digitized all of my old pictures ages ago, and I still have some of her if you’d like me to email them to you.”

“I would, actually,” Jon murmured, sitting back down and resting his head in his hands. “I don’t know what I actually expected to get out of this. The truth was there in black and white once I saw records of my mother’s miscarriage and her Asherman’s Syndrome.”

“That’s why they couldn’t conceive,” Benjen breathed, his eyes widening. “He never gave me the specifics.”

“He never gave me anything,” Jon muttered.

“He did love you as his own,” Benjen said. “For all his faults, that much was never in question.”

Jon sighed and stood back up, staring his uncle in the eye and saying, “You’ll remember that I was here but think that there was nothing strange about that at all. It’s not worth mentioning to anyone ever.”

“Just a simple visit,” Benjen said, “something the director arranged as a favor to me.”

“That works,” Jon nodded. “Give me your number and email address, and I’ll send for those pictures you mentioned.”

“Of course,” Benjen nodded as Jon took out his phone.

A moment later all of his contact information was in it, and he sent his uncle a quick email to confirm everything.

“I’ll send you them once I get the chance,” Benjen said. “I really need to get back to work, though.”

“Right, right,” Jon nodded, following him out of his office. “Thank you, by the way.”

“I should have told you all of this ages ago,” Benjen sighed, cocking an eyebrow at the sight of the three blondes who were waiting outside.

“They’re with me,” Jon said, knowing that would fall under his visit in his uncle’s mind and thus be uninteresting and normal as well. Turning to them, he said, “We can go.”

“Take care, Jon,” Benjen said, “and the rest of you too.”

“Take care,” Jon replied.

With that, the four of them left, each of the older vampires, even Daenerys, having the tact to keep quiet until they reached the car.

“I know you heard every word of that,” Jon said, and the three immediately hugged him together, making him laugh even as his eyes grew damp.

“Did you get what you hoped for out of it?” Shiera asked.

“I got confirmation, and that is what it is,” Jon sighed. “I might actually be able to develop some sort of relationship with my uncle now, as much as I can with anyone who isn’t like us, but mostly I think I just need to get out of here.”

“I’ll drive this time,” Rhaenyra said, fetching the keys from his pocket and getting into the car.

It was a simple black BMW, nothing too ostentatious, especially compared to the cars he’d seen at the manor, but it was quite comfortable, and as Jon sat down in the passenger’s seat, he let himself sink into it, his mind racing at what he’d learned. Going in, he’d already known deep down that there was little chance he’d be told it was all a misunderstanding, but now he had undeniable proof that his entire life he’d not actually known who his biological parents were.

“I know it would have been hard, but I just wish he’d found it in him to tell me,” Jon thought to himself, lamenting the fact that this was a conversation he was simply never going to have with his father. “At least now you know for sure how we’re connected.”

“That hardly matters now,” Rhaenyra said softly. “How are you feeling?”

“I don’t know,” Jon sighed. “I’m not a child, and I can understand why he couldn’t bring himself to tell me the truth back in the day, especially after learning how apparently dysfunctional the family was before I was born, but...I don’t know if he ever would have, and I never will. Given that vampires exist, I don’t suppose ghosts do?”

“Not that we can commune with,” Shiera replied, and he sighed, shaking his head.

“It bothers me...more deeply than I’d have expected, honestly, but I’m just going to have to live with the reality of everything,” Jon muttered. “At least I know the truth.”

“I’m sorry I put all this in motion,” Shiera sighed, reaching over to hug him, and he grasped her arm gently.

“You weren’t going to rest until we knew how I was related to you for reasons that I can understand,” he replied. “I’ll be fine, really.”

“You’ll be able to lean on us in the meantime,” Rhaenyra said softly. “This was a shocking revelation, and it’s not something you need to process alone if you don’t want to.”

“She’s right,” Daenerys chimed in, smiling at him in the rearview mirror, and despite himself, Jon smiled too.

“Once we get back to Whitetree, we can sneak in and climb the weirwood if you want,” Rhaenyra said, and he grinned.

“Sounds like a plan,” Jon replied.

His life had been beyond bizarre for quite a while now, but while there had been more than a few unpleasant aspects of it, he had to admit that getting to know Shiera, Rhaenyra, and Daenerys had been an absolute highlight. The three vampires were warmer than he’d ever have imagined and had welcomed him in a way that no one had since he was a boy. It had been a long time since he’d had people in his life that he could rely on so completely, and he’d forgotten how wonderful it felt to do so.

“The fact that they’re all stunningly beautiful doesn’t hurt either,” he thought to himself as he looked at Daenerys and Shiera in the back.

He’d been sleeping with both of them for a while by then, separately, despite the fact that both had said more than once that that could change anytime, and while Rhaenyra hadn’t gone out of her way to seduce him yet, he knew that if he approached her, she’d not turn him down.

“I have yet to fully embrace this new life I’ve been given,” he thought to himself as he watched the northern wilderness pass him by. *“Maybe it’s time to change that.”*

“Do you think I’m ready to learn how to hunt and feed yet?” Jon asked, and Rhaenyra smiled.

“I do,” she replied. “I was going to tell you on the trainride back to the Vale. Your self-control has improved by leaps and bounds since you started training, and you haven’t physically struggled to pull away from us when ordered in days.”

“It is still a struggle, but I can force myself,” Jon admitted.

“It never really stops being at least a little difficult, but once you learn to master your urges, you stop being an active danger to others,” Shiera said.

“I’d still advise against being around hospitals for the foreseeable future, as the sheer amount of blood in an ICU can still drive fledglings feral with sufficient exposure even after you gain a measure of self-control,” Rhaenyra murmured, looking at him, “but you are ready for the next steps, and I’m proud of how quickly you’ve adapted.”

It was still strange looking at this woman who appeared to be years younger than him and seeing her as the aged authority figure that she was, but he’d gotten rather used to it, and her praise did make him feel better in general as they continued along their way.

“So I could fall from here and not break anything?” Jon asked, looking down at the dark village below them. “I know we’re rather durable, but we’re so high up?”

“Edgar Estermont jumped out of a plane once just to see how he’d fare,” Rhaenyra replied. “He was perfectly fine.”

“We are, to put it in video game terms, immune to fall damage,” Daenerys said, and he chuckled, looking around the tree at her.

The four of them were all holding onto the trunk of the tree with nothing but their own strength and grip to keep them up and were each enjoying the view. Whitetree wasn’t a city littered with high-rises so there was nothing around them to obscure their view. If they were human, the sheer darkness blanketing the land would have made that view almost nonexistent but as vampires, they were able to see well, and Jon found it to be every bit as amazing as Rhaenyra had described.

“What time is it?” Daenerys asked. “I think my watch is dead.”

“Just a moment,” Rhaenyra murmured, reaching into her coat and pulling out her pocket watch. “We should probably get going. Sunrise won’t be for hours yet, but the train will take time to bring

us back home, and we might still be able to return to the manor before things become dangerous for us.”

Without another word, she let go of the tree and kicked off of its trunk, rolling through the air to the ground below.

“Show off,” Jon chuckled, simply letting go as the others did the same.

They landed with the same extraordinary grace that he’d found vampires always did and followed Rhaenyra back to the car. Whitetree, as it turned out, was largely dead at night, and they made their way through the empty streets uninterrupted before driving south to the train station.

“I must say, given that I’ve been on planes and in condos that are ridiculously high up, I didn’t think that would be quite as amazing as you described, but it was,” Jon murmured, and the ancient vampire smiled.

“I’m glad you liked it,” Rhaenyra replied. “There’s something to be said for being that high up with nothing around you all. No walls, no restraints, just the strength of your arms and the wind in your hair.”

“Did we mention she was born in the mountains?” Daenerys quipped, and Rhaenyra rolled her eyes.

“You know I’m right about that,” she replied.

“I forgot to ask yesterday; whatever happened to that chalice?” Jon asked.

“It was lost,” Rhaenyra replied. “After a particularly brutal battle with Cole and his lickspittles, it was lost in the rubble of a keep that collapsed, and though a few of us returned later on to try and find it, we never managed. I’ve looked off and on for years, and I know that Roose Bolton has been obsessed with it forever, but neither of us ever managed.”

“I guess if you found it we could make more vampires without the whole genetic requirement,” Jon said, and she shook her head.

“My uncle and the others tried after their own transformation to see if they could use it on others, but it had no effect,” Rhaenyra replied. “The odd compulsion that they all seemed to be affected by suggested that the chalice had more power to it than simply the ability to transform those who drank from it into vampires. The fact that it affected six of us specifically and could be used to create no more bloodlines than that, I always thought, meant that it possessed a form of intelligence too.”

“Given that two of the bloodlines went extinct, if we found it, that would potentially allow us to make two more vampires, but we don’t know where it is, and it may well have been destroyed when that keep fell,” Shiera added. “This was before my time, by the way.”

“Its other great power was the ability to track our numbers,” Rhaenyra said. “Every time one of us created a new vampire, a new gem appeared on it, matching the specific bloodline.”

“Fascinating,” Jon murmured, wondering how exactly that had worked.

“It’s probably a moot point,” Rhaenyra sighed, smiling as she reached the train station. Eyeing Daenerys, she said, “Remember that this isn’t ours and we can’t leave anything in it.”

“You could at least pretend that wasn’t directed at me,” the younger vampire huffed even as she stuffed her phone back in her pocket, and Shiera chuckled.

The four of them made their way to their train and boarded it without needing to speak to anyone.

“Mistress,” Alyn breathed at the sight of Rhaenyra, “we’re ready to go?”

“We are,” she replied, and both he and Addam turned and left as the four vampires sat down.

“It took us about two hours to get here, so we should make it back well before sunrise,” Jon murmured, as he checked his phone. “I’m surprised you like trains, given everything, Rhaenyra.”

“Trains might be the last invention I actually took to eagerly,” Rhaenyra replied. “They were just so much faster and more comfortable than carriages for long journeys.”

“I can’t imagine what it must be like to have seen the world change so much in one lifetime,” Jon murmured and she smiled.

“With luck, you won’t have to imagine it forever,” Rhaenyra replied.

“I’m going to go warm up some blood,” Daenerys announced. “Any of you want any?”

“I imagine we all do,” Shiera replied. “I’ll come along and we can bring the mugs together.”

As the two of them left, the train started moving, and Jon looked at the painted window, wondering just how much of a pain it was going to be for the thralls to strip it all off. So focused was he on that that he failed to notice Rhaenyra staring at him until he looked back at her.

“Is something wrong?” he asked.

“No, I was just...I just noticed that you remind me in a couple ways of my uncle,” Rhaenyra replied. “The sharpness of your jaw and the fullness of your lips. It really is amazing how much certain features can persist inside bloodlines across centuries.”

“It’s genuinely funny that my mother had purple eyes,” Jon said. “If she hadn’t, I would have wondered where mine came from.”

“It’s like it was fate,” Rhaenyra murmured. “From what I’ve seen, Ashara had no genetic connection to us.”

“You checked?” Jon asked. “I thought you figured from the start that I was connected to Rhaegar.”

“I pursued all possible explanations, and given the rarity of purple eyes, I tend to have any mortal with them investigated just to see if they might be related to us,” Rhaenyra replied. Leaning in, she murmured, “You really have progressed extraordinarily well as a vampire.”

“Well, I’ve had a good teacher,” Jon rumbled, and her eyes darkened slightly as he stared into them.

“Shiera should have known at a glance that you were one of us,” Rhaenyra cooed, cupping his cheek. “You’re gorgeous in a way I’ve only ever known Targaryen men to be.”

“Beauty clearly runs in our family,” Jon murmured, and she smiled widely, feeling her undead heart skip a beat at his clear acceptance of who he was. “I don’t know if I’d have handled learning the truth half as well without you three. You’ve all been so good to me.”

“I can be much better,” Rhaenyra purred as she pressed her lips to his.

Like Shiera and Daenerys, she was stunning, with a beautiful, heart-shaped face and full, pouty lips, and as she kissed him, he cupped her cheeks and returned it eagerly. The next second she was in his lap, all restraint fleeing from her as she did what she’d wanted to since she first met him. His arms snaked around her, and he deepened the kiss, his tongue brushing against hers. She matched him move for move, and when he sucked gently on her probing tongue, she moaned into his mouth.

“Oh, finally,” Daenerys beamed as she walked back in, holding a mug of warm blood in each hand. “I was beginning to fear we’d never get around to having open orgies together.”

“Some people need to get to know one another before suggesting group sex, Dany,” Shiera snarked, and Daenerys just shrugged, too pleased at seeing Rhaenyra grind herself against Jon while they made out passionately to care at all about the dig.

“Mmm, so how about it?” Rhaenyra asked. “Think you can handle all of us?”

“I won’t have to worry about my heart giving out at least,” Jon quipped, and they all giggled.

Shiera and Daenerys handed them both their mugs of blood, and they drank it down quickly, not wanting to let it cool instead. Rhaenyra was still in Jon’s lap, moving languidly atop him, and smirking every time she felt his cock strain against his pants under her. The second she finished her blood, she set the mug down and pulled his shirt open, sending buttons flying in every direction.

“Fuck, you’re developing quite the warrior’s build,” she purred, running her hands over his chest, and he grinned.

Because of how a vampire’s metabolism worked, he didn’t have to worry about what food he bothered eating affecting him in any negative way, and he got everything he needed from blood to fully sustain his body. Because of this, his workout routine would have shown him even greater results than it did before even if he didn’t intensify it, which he had. He tossed his shirt aside, knowing that the thralls would sew the buttons back on, and kissed Rhaenyra hungrily as he pulled off her coat.

Next to them, Shiera and Daenerys were both already fully nude and were kissing passionately in another seat. He peered over at them and saw Dany sitting in Shiera’s lap, already moaning loudly as she sucked on her hard, pink nipples.

“There’s a mattress set up a couple compartments over,” Rhaenyra announced as she jumped out of his lap. “I had it put in just in case we ended up having sex.”

“I suppose we are rather predictable,” Shiera chuckled, standing up and carrying Daenerys over.

Jon watched the two and licked his lips, removing his belt as he followed them out of the train car. Rhaenyra shed her clothes as she walked, utterly uncaring about where they fell, and he supposed they didn’t need to. This train would be theirs for a little while longer and was going to be cleaned thoroughly by her servants, after all. By the time they reached the mattress, she was wearing only her bra and panties, and he quickly unhooked the former, embracing her short, curvaceous form

from behind as she pulled it over her shoulders. The most buxom of them, her breasts were large and full, sitting quite high on her chest, and she whimpered as he cupped them with his hands.

“You’re so beautiful,” he murmured, leaning down and pressing his lips to her neck.

“So are you,” Rhaenyra whispered, turning around and pulling down his fly.

Shiera and Daenerys both stopped as they heard it and turned to watch them, eager to see Rhaenyra’s reaction to seeing his erection.

“My, my,” the older vampire purred. “I see you two weren’t exaggerating.”

“Fucking amazing, isn’t he?” Daenerys asked. “His big, fat Daddy dick is going to feel so good inside you, Mummy.”

“Fucking hells,” Jon groaned, feeling his cock throb almost painfully at her sinful words, and she giggled at his reaction.

“You dirty, dirty man,” Rhaenyra said teasingly, her eyes sparkling with mirth. “Did you corrupt my innocent little daughter?”

Jon almost laughed at the suggestion that there was anything innocent about Daenerys.

“He really did,” Daenerys cooed, lying back and reaching down to spread her fleshy nether lips, showing off how soaking wet she was. “His big cock ruined my poor little pussy, Mummy, and now no other man could ever hope to satisfy me.”

“Well, if you did ruin my little girl, I hope you realize she’s your responsibility now,” Rhaenyra cooed. “Of course, I can’t say for certain yet if you really did ruin her.”

“I guess you’ll just need to experience for yourself,” Shiera called out, playing along, and Jon grinned.

“Well, if that’s what you need...” he rumbled, and she licked her lips.

“That’s exactly what I need,” Rhaenyra breathed, wrapping a hand around the base of his cock as she leaned in.

Jon gasped as she wrapped her lips around his cock, and he reached for her head, his fingers snaking into her long, silver-gold locks. Given how long it seemed to have been since she was last with a man, he might have expected her to be a bit rusty at this, yet as she started bobbing her head up and down, that turned out not to be even slightly true, and soon enough she was swallowing him to the root, making his legs shake.

“Fuck me, you’re so fucking good at that,” Jon groaned, and her eyes filled with a mix of pride and mirth.

“She may or may not have practiced on some of our dildos after I told her about your size,” Shiera said, laughing when Rhaenyra gave a two-finger salute.

“She was so much more proper when we met,” Daenerys giggled. “I was a terrible influence.”

“You usually are,” Shiera purred, pushing the other blonde onto her back and grasping her breasts.

Daenerys gasped and moaned, holding her head to her chest as Shiera began to pepper her supple mounds with kisses. She moved lower and lower, her lips never leaving the other blonde’s soft, pale skin for more than a moment, and when she reached her mound and saw just how sopping wet she was, she grinned.

“Oh, fuck,” Daenerys gasped, grabbing Shiera’s head with one hand while she gripped the mattress with the other. “Mmm, just like that.”

“Gods,” Jon groaned, feeling like he was going to explode.

Having a woman as beautiful as Rhaenyra Targaryen sucking his cock would have been incredible enough, but to experience that while a pair of equally stunning women had sex next to him was a pleasure he never would have imagined back in his old life. This was the sort of thing that men who were really famous, really rich, or just really willing to spend significant money on prostitutes enjoyed, not him, and yet it had become his reality. Just as he started to feel like he was going to cum, Rhaenyra let his length slip from her lips.

“I need to feel this monster inside me,” she purred, standing up and pulling down her panties.

Jon had honestly expected her to have a bush, given her age and obvious reluctance to adapt to more modern trends, but like Shiera and Daenerys, she was completely bare between her legs, and he licked his lips at the sight of her.

“Daenerys and Shiera have both spoken quite highly of your tongue, but for the moment, I just want to see if warm flesh feels as good as I remember,” Rhaenyra said, taking his hand and leading him to the bed.

“How long has it been?” Jon asked, and she gave him a wistful stare.

“Too long,” Rhaenyra murmured as she sat down next to Daenerys and slapped Shiera’s ass.

“Mmm,” the silver-haired beauty purred, looking over at them. “I’m glad I’m here to see this. You’ve craved proper cock for longer than any of us, Nyra.”

“Shiera,” Daenerys whined, and Shiera rolled her eyes.

“You know I’m not going to just leave you wanting, darling,” she said, pushing three fingers inside her dripping cunt and curling them towards her g-spot, making her gasp and squirm, “but I do want to watch Rhaenyra take Jon for the first time.”

“Let’s give them what they want,” Rhaenyra grinned, and Jon returned the look as he moved between her legs.

Her clit was slightly larger than the others’, looking swollen and taut as it peaked out past its hood, and he wanted nothing more than to drop to his knees and find out how she’d look and sound when he swirled his tongue around it, but she’d made it clear what she wanted first, and he was more than happy to oblige. He couldn’t resist slapping it with his wet cock, though, and he chuckled when she squeaked.

“Such impertinence,” Rhaenyra breathed, only to whimper as he brushed her fleshy folds with the head of his cock.

“Kind of hard to act offended while you’re squirming like this,” Jon grinned, and Rhaenyra bared her fangs.

“Shut up and fuck me,” she commanded, and he lined himself up before pushing forward.

Rhaenyra’s eyes went wide as saucers, her mouth rounding in shock as she felt him spread her inner walls wide, stretching her even more than she’d expected.

“You feel even bigger than you look,” she breathed, and Daenerys grinned, reaching over and taking one of her hands in hers.

“Isn’t he amazing, Nyra?” she asked.

“How does she feel?” Shiera asked, snaking a hand around the nape of his neck.

“I can’t believe this is my life now,” Jon groaned, never having imagined that he’d ever have sex with one insanely beautiful woman while two others watched and commentated. “You’re so fucking tight, Nyra.”

“You feel like a damn fist,” Rhaenyra breathed, taking a moment to relax her inner muscles to let him sink inside her more easily. “You really are equal to some of our favorite toys.”

“Shiera mentioned the first time we slept together that you three were all…” Jon went to say.

“Massive size queens?” Daenerys asked with a grin. “It’s not our fault it feels so good to be truly filled up.”

“Oh, is that what you want?” Shiera asked, adding a fourth finger to her and making her gasp.

“Do it,” Daenerys breathed. “You know I can take the whole thing.”

“Gods,” Jon said, shaking his head as he felt his cock throb with need.

He had been fucking Rhaenyra with short, slow strokes, burying more and more of his cock inside her each time he thrust forward, and she hadn’t said anything about the pace, but when he had only a couple inches to go, she wrapped her legs around his waist and pulled him in hard, grinning when he fell forward and only barely caught himself on his forearms.

“You could have just said ‘go faster,’” Jon chuckled, and she giggled.

“That worked too,” Rhaenyra replied. “I’m far from fragile, Jon, and you really don’t need to worry about hurting me.”

“Speaking as someone who’s worn her like a hand puppet, I can ahh!” Daenerys shrieked as Shiera added her thumb, pushing her entire fist inside her.

“Fuck me, Jon,” Rhaenyra breathed. “Fuck me until I can’t…”

CRASH

The thunderous sound echoed through the entire train, coming from the roof of the other compartments, and Rhaenyra paled, smelling a scent she hadn't detected in years and knew she'd never forget.

"No," she breathed, rolling them over and jumping off of Jon. "No, it's not..."

Another crash sounded as Shiera pulled her hand out of Daenerys, and all four vampires turned just as the door to their compartment opened. The man who walked in was a mangled wreck, scarred and deformed, and yet from his furious green eyes alone, Jon knew him.

"I shouldn't be surprised to find you in this state, you whore," Cole spat, looking around the room and glaring at each of them. "Your vile little family has grown again. I look forward to shrinking it once more."

Rhaenyra glared venomously at the murderous lunatic before her, her rage at him matched only by her fear for the others.